

*/THE BULLETIN/*

**THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DECATUR COUNTY**

Volume II - No. 31

Greensburg, Indiana

March 18, 1967

**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!**

OCCASION: Spring meeting  
SPEAKER: Surprise! Suffice it to  
say that our new President  
Mrs. Mary Lue Miller--Rushville  
Mrs. L. E. VanArdsall  
Mr. Willard Low  
Mrs. Willard Low  
Mr. John Mitchell  
Mrs. Tillie Black  
Mrs. Ralph Throp  
Mr. Dale Schaffer--Chicago 567  
\* \* \* \*

**THE SOCIETY'S OFFICERS 1967**

DATE: Saturday, April 1, 1967  
at 8:00 p.m.

President.....Grant Henderson PLACE: Billings Elementary School  
1st V-President....Gene H. McCoy West Washington Street  
2nd V-President....Paul O. Jolliff Greensburg, Indiana  
Corresponding Secy...Mrs. Van  
Batterton BRING AS MANY GUESTS AS YOU LIKE!  
525 N. Broadway  
Greensburg, Ind. Please note that the Billings Ele-  
Recording Secy....Miss Helen K. mentary School is located on West  
Bussell Washington Street, just off US 421  
711 N. East St. to Indianapolis. There is ample  
Greensburg, Ind. parking East of the Building. NO  
Treasurer...Miss Alpha E. Thackery SMOKING PLEASE! Those are the rules.  
RFD 6, Greensburg, Ind.  
\* \* \* \*

THE LAST MEETING--As always the local newspaper covered the story very well--so if you did not attend or do not take the paper--you are the loser. For those few, permit us to say that it was a grand evening and "the" social event of the year. Mr. Hubert Hawkins, secretary of the Indiana Historical Society, and a Hoosier to the core, quite appropriately devoted his talk for the greater part to the Indiana Sesquicentennial Year which had just closed. One of his stories had to do with the Indiana State Seal. Now you will recall that the Seal pictures a man hacking away at a beech tree, while in the foreground is a buffalo taking off for taller timber--and in the background the sun is coming up--No! not going down, for the sun never sets on Indiana and besides no fool would spend all day chopping down a beech tree. The moral, as he put it, is that you have to get up real early in Indiana if you want to see a buffalo.....Now not everyone knows that Decatur County has a Seal--that of THE DECATUR CIRCUIT COURT. Pictured is a jaybird floating aloft on a cloud, waving an olive branch in its beak or is it a ragweed? Who knows? And why a jaybird!!

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LITTLE KILLBUCK\*  
(Franklin County Indian Lore)  
By  
Grant Henderson

A clever writer, one to whom I have been so often indebted for many things, wise and otherwise, has told me that to be thrown upon one's own resources is to be cast into the very lap of fortune; for our faculties then undergo a wonderful development and display an energy of which they were previously unsusceptible. Our minds are, let us say, like cloves of garlic, which must be crushed before they evince their vigor and put forth their virtue.

So with the amateur historian when the trial of research engages his attention. From an anomaly of clues picked up, a few here, a few there, he must devise a tale more or less true, give or take an unintentional perversion now and then. So many events supposed to have taken place ages ago are imbedded so deeply in a mixture of legend and fact that the discriminating historian has, literally, to "beat the bushes" in his attempt to bring to the light of the present day sufficient information from which he may reconstruct a story that has at least a foundation of truth.

Such was my experience when I undertook to secure enough data to enable me to reanimate the story of what is said to have been the last Indian "uprising" in this area, the story in which the outstanding figure is "Little Killbuck", now and then referred to as "Bill Killbuck", and who was probably the last native Indian seen in Franklin county. The first shocking event took place, according to the information unearthed, in the Little Salt Creek neighborhood east of Buena Vista.

The date was March 13, 1813. Two young men, both of whom were little more than boys, Stafford and Toone (first names unknown) were clearing land for a Mr. John Baker, a minister, who lived in one of the two blockhouses in the area. Because of his residence there it was known locally as the "Baker Blockhouse", and was situated nearwhat is currently known as "Stipp's Hill". A second blockhouse, known as the "Bryson Blockhouse" in honor of the occupants thereof, stood about two miles north or northeast of the Baker blockhouse and on the opposite side of Little Salt Creek. Earlier, though when they were erected I was unable to learn, Territorial Governor, William Henry Harrison, had advised the residents of Franklin county to build a number of blockhouses at strategic points throughout the northwestern part of the county; though there had been no recent Indian trouble, Governor Harrison deemed it best that precautionary measures be taken, especially since a band of Delaware Indians had occupied for some time an area known locally as "the table-lands" about two miles north of the Baker blockhouse.

On the evening of the tragedy the boys were just completing work for the day, both chopping at the moment on the same tree, when four Indians, from where they lay concealed in a thicket, fired upon them. Both fell mortally wounded. Stafford, however, jumped up and managed to make his way to the Baker blockhouse three quarters of a mile away. Toone, shot through the spinal column, unable to move, was scalped by one of the Indians and left to die.

Stafford, on arrival at the blockhouse, was found to be shot through the stomach and one lung. Toone's cries for help could be heard throughout the night, but Mr. Baker and the few other men in the blockhouse hesitated to go to his rescue fearing that a band of Indians awaited them. Near morning, however, a runner was sent to the Bryson blockhouse to request aid. He returned with Hugh Bryson, a brawny twenty-three year old lad, who had a bit of a reputation as an Indian fighter and tracker. With Bryson leading them a half-dozen men went out and brought young Toone in. No Indians had been seen or heard. Then Bryson and three companions prepared to go after the Indians. Legend tells us that two of his companions were James Halsey and Robert Langister--the name of the other man has been forgotten. At the scene of the tragedy Bryson surveyed the area carefully and then he and his followers took the trail of the Indians which led in a northwesterly direction. At first it was a slow painstaking task for young Bryson but on the third day, near evening, he told his three companions that he was certain that they weren't far from the Indians. Having the men conceal themselves, he stole forward alone to reconnoiter. In not too long a time he returned and told them that the Indians were encamped in a draw about one-half mile ahead. The white men decided to wait until daybreak to make the attack. While his companions slept, Bryson kept watch. Near dawn he aroused them and together they slowly stole nearer and nearer the Indian camp. They found the Indians already astir. The Indian hunters crept on; when they thought themselves near enough for effective work they sprang to their feet and opened fire. Three of the Indians fell, the fourth ran towards the river--Blue River, in the neighborhood of what is now Morristown, Indiana--and another, not too severely wounded, leaped to his feet and followed. Bryson and his men ran in pursuit and Bryson overtook the wounded Indian near the river's edge. The redskin begged for mercy but none was shown. Bryson shot and scalped him. Meanwhile, the uninjured Indian had plunged into the river and made his way across. However, he had barely emerged on the opposite side when Halsey, who had been loading his rifle, shot him through the heart, crossed the river and scalped him. They then returned to take the scalps of the two Indians left dead or dying--so they thought, in the draw. But one of them was gone; unhit, it was learned later, he had dropped at the first crack of the rifles and then made his escape while the white men were engaged with the escaping Indians. And so well had he concealed his trail that even the skillful Bryson was unable to follow it.

Bryson and his men returned to Franklin County as soon as they could and told their story. Meanwhile both Stafford and Toone had passed away, both dying in the Baker blockhouse. Services for the boys were held by the Rev. John Baker, and the boys, placed in homemade coffins, were buried in a bit of highland just east of the blockhouse. No stones or markers of any kind mark the boys' graves, though not too many years ago some of the elderly men in the Stipp's Hill area were said to be able to point out the grave sites.

Some time after the "massacre" on Blue River it was noted by the residents of the Little Salt Creek country that Little Killbuck, a well-known brave of the nearby Delaware band, no longer was seen in the area. Prior to this time he had been often seen. The fact that he no longer came looked suspicious. He had been something of a bully, of course. No white man cared for his company. To be sure, most of the other Indians had been merely tolerated; a few, however, were well liked by the whites. But not Little Killbuck. No one regretted his absence, but they "smelt a mouse". Why did he suddenly shun the Baker blockhouse neighborhood? Rumor had it that he was spending his time in the Sane's Creek hills west of Laurel.

About this time one dark and stormy night a band of robbers -- or Indians -- it was anyone's guess -- attempted to break into the John Criss home which stood on the west side of Little Salt Creek and almost directly opposite the Bryson blockhouse. Criss stood by to try to repel the invaders in the event that the door gave way, while his wife rushed to place a lighted lamp in front of an upstairs window -- a "sign" that, understood by the Brysons through previous arrangement, meant "trouble here. Help needed. Hurry!" Young Hugh Bryson, aroused by another member of his family, dressed hurriedly and dashed out, rifle in hand. For a moment he hesitated at the bank of the stream on account of high water, then he plunged in and, fortunately, made his way across with less trouble than anticipated. Not certainly understanding the situation, fearing that the marauders, whoever they were, were about to gain entry into the Criss home, he fired almost immediately upon gaining the west bank. The culprits dashed away. Who had they been? Later it was learned that a wounded Indian was "taking things easy" in the Sane's Creek hills. Had he been one of the gang at the Criss cabin that night? Was it Little Killbuck and his companions that Hugh Bryson had fired upon?

By 1818 all the Indians, excepting Little Killbuck, had left Franklin County, moved west to a reservation. Little Killbuck remained in the Sane's Creek hills. However, he had grown somewhat bold again and was frequently seen in the Stipp's Hill and Little Salt Creek areas. Though it was never proven, possibly not even inquired into because of lack of evidence, it was believed by a considerable number of people that Cornelius Bryson, one of Hugh's brothers, was murdered by Little Killbuck. According to the story as it comes down to us

today, Cornelius Bryson picked up his rifle one evening and started out to try to locate a wild turkey heard calling deep in the woods. He was never seen or heard of again. Little Killbuck, it was known and angrily commented upon, was adept at imitating the call of the wild turkey.

Some time between 1818 and 1820, Hugh Bryson and Little Killbuck chanced to meet in a store in one of the local villages. Legend doesn't tell us which one; possibly it no longer exists. No matter. Little Killbuck had been drinking and was inclined to be overbearing. Bryson ignored him. Little Killbuck grew bolder, and finally began to boast about his shrewd escape from Bryson and his companions in the marsh along Blue River several years before. Bryson pricked up his ears. This was the first "proof" that anyone had that Little Killbuck was one of the murderers of Stafford and Toone. Was it true? Bryson, for one, didn't care -- much. Perhaps "it was the drink talking" but Bryson was only too glad to take the Indian's word. As soon as he could, and as quietly as he could, he consulted a few other men, men that he believed could be depended upon. Would they help? They would. They thought as little of the brutal Killbuck as did Bryson. They would hang him. Good riddance anyway, true story or not. But it wasn't, after all, Little Killbuck's time to die. This time he "smelt a mouse" and slipped unobtrusively away.

Things quieted down. In a few months Little Killbuck was very much in evidence again, going almost where and when he pleased, hunting, drinking, boasting. Some time in the spring of 1820 he went to the Bryson blockhouse and induced John, Hugh's younger brother, to go hunting with him. John's father tried to talk the boy out of going-- he felt it dangerous at any time to be too friendly with Little Killbuc, but he was especially worried on this occasion because the Indian had been drinking. But John wouldn't listen. He didn't want Little Killbuck to think that he was afraid to go. So off they went. After a bit of time passed, John's father, still suspicious and worried, sat out to follow. Shortly thereafter he heard voices raised in apparent argument -- or anger, and eacing cautiously forward he made it to a point that placed him quite near his son and the Indian. Little Killbuck was certainly drunk; he was shouting and gesturing, telling young john in no uncertain terms what he meant to do to his brother, Hugh, sooner or later. The elder Bryson, knowing that the Indian was too drunk to give the matter any particular thought, calmly walked out of his place of concealment and up to the two hunters. And just as calmly he knocked the drunken red man down, took his gun, and returned home with John. Meanwhile, Hugh Bryson, off somewhere on private business, had heard that Little Killbuck had gone to the Bryson home. He didn't trust the Indian. He hurried home and arrived there about the time

that his father and young brother returned. He listened to their story. He said nothing. He went into the house, came out with his rifle and once more took the trail of Little Killbuck. However, the Indianahad moved on, evidently he had moved rapidly in spite of his condition. Night came on and still Bryson hadn't come upon him. Hugh returned home. Next morning he set out again, following no trail this time, but heading directly for Little Killbuck's favorite haunts. He was determined to find him. And he did. Searching the Sane's Creek hills neighborhood he came upon the Indian late the same day. He was sitting on a log, back against a tree, near the Derbyshire Falls. Bryson shot him.

\* Among others, I wish especially to acknowledge my debt to the late Mr. Edgar Harley, whose notes on Franklin County Indian lore, loaned to me by his son, Mr. Clyde Harley, have proved of paramount value...The Author.

OUR NEW PRESIDENT--Grant Henderson is a native of Franklin County and a charter member of the Society. A keen and observing student of Nature, he has written such works as "SONG OF THE WOODLARK", "FOUR-SQUARE LINES" and the latest of these "THE SHACK"--the titles all of which suggest the pastoral scene with which he is so familiar. He is a collector of rare books, particularly those by early Indiana authours, and has an extensive library. Outstanding as a naturalist, it is sheer delight for one to converse with Mr. Henderson on his favorite subject--the great outdoors. His livelihood comes from the collection, sales and distribution of plant life about him--Nature again affording him both a vocation and an avocation. As a poet, we like to think of him as "THE BARD OF BULL FORK"--this we say with all sincerity and respect for the lord and master of WOODLARKLAND--his home in the woods!

SELF-SHARPENERS--"The county of Decatur, and its inhabitants, without making any special parade as to literature, morals or enterprise, may be said to be self-sharpeners, steadily progressing in a variety of ways, and not inferior in respectability to any part of the State." ca. 1870 ed.

### SHOOTING IN THE NEW YEAR

The custom of "shooting in the New Year" is a memory of my childhood, in the Mt. Etna neighborhood, in southeastern Saltcreek Township. The young men of the neighborhood would gather early on New Year's Eve, at some one home in the neighborhood, decide on a Captain, and on the route to be taken for their shooting visits. Then, as the early darkness settled over the land, they started on their round. A stop was made at each home on the route, and their guns fired, along with cries of "Happy New Year." Such a noise as they did make. I always hated that part of it, especially if they got to our house in the wee small hours of the morning. All the families of the community were expecting them, and prepared refreshments -- but all acted as if it were a great surprise. When the shooting started, the man of the house went to the door, and with much "surprise" and small talk, invited the "shooters" as they were called, into the house for refreshments -- and to get warm by the big heating stoves or open fireplaces. I recall that my parents served doughnuts, popcorn balls, sweet cider, and hot coffee to the men. In my day I remember Allen Hart, Logan Alexander, Will Shouse, Clyde and Ora Parmer, Jim Castor, Tom Hartig, Arch and Bert Paramore among the "shooters."

My father, the late Ambrose Hickman, left me this account among his notes. "Shooting in the New Year was a great event in my childhood. Three of my older brothers were at home, Cash, Mort and France, and always took part in this New Year's eve affair, and would come home in the early light of New Years with great tales of adventure, mostly centered around the refreshments served. I longed for the time to go out shooting, but not until I was fourteen did my mother let me go. My brothers were not too anxious to take me even then, but because I played "fiddle" as a violin was called, I was allowed to tag along, as my brothers put it. It was a very cold night, and a deep snow was on the ground. I soon wished I had stayed at home. I do not remember where we went or who went along, except Little Ike Parmer, who was several years older than I was. Little Ike later married my sister Amazette - Am, as we called her. I do know I have never been so cold in my life, before or since. That New Year's Day - and it must have been 1880 - I spent the day lying on the floor back of the kitchen stove trying to get thawed out, and catch up on my sleep. I decided that never again would I go with New Year's shooters. But when I was some years older I did start going and then I thought we had a good time and I enjoyed it. My brother Mort played a bass fiddle, I played the first fiddle, and Ed Hart played the second fiddle. The rest of the men

did the shooting and we did the fiddling. After we were invited in we usually played several "request" pieces. If enough people were there, they usually danced a round or two to our music. Later, the three of us used to play at all the dances in our neighborhood, and we called ourselves a string band."

I do not remember when this custom ceased in our neighborhood, but the last one I have a memory of, that I can date, was 1905. I remember that year because Grover Harding of near New Point, was our teacher at the Mt. Etna school, and boarded in our home. I recall that he, and I think Ed Glidewell, who taught at the New Pennington school, joined the shooters that New Year's Eve, and like my father, of years before, they came home exhausted.

Whether this was done in other parts of Decatur County or Indiana I do not know. I have read that it was a custom in parts of Pennsylvania. Since coming to Virginia, I have been told that much the same custom existed in Highland County, near the West Virginia line. Here the guns were fired, then poetry was recited to the host, as he came to the door to invite the shooters in.

With no greeting cards to be sent, no telephones, no radios, no TV, shooting in the New Year was a means of communication, a means of wishing others a happy, healthy, prosperous New Year. It started us out on the New Year with a warm glow of good will.

Anna Lee (Hickman) Linville  
Lexington, Virginia

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A LEGEND--The Clonans and the Ballmans are gone, along with them the barracks, the band hall, the depot, the furniture factory, the tin shop, the drug store, the bank, the piling yard and the saw mill, the hardware store, the jewelry shop, the handle factory and the saloon.....Nothing remains of their day except something that is not prone to change---Tub Creek! There always, it will continue to be---Always. Any one who has ever lived in New Point knows that Tub Creek merely runs through the town; it never floods or drives people from their homes; that in its time, it abounded with sun fish, chubs and craws; that in winter, its icy surface is the delight of the younger fry and come summer time no hole is too deep for wading, which reminds us of an old legend....Many people have come to New Point, and as many have left, but rest assured---if they have ever waded in Tub Creek---some time, some day, they will return. They may not stay for long, but come back they will---if they have ever waded in Tub Creek!

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/THE JAYBIRD/

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Mr. Willard Low  
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Mrs. Ralph Throp  
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OCCASION: Spring meeting

SPEAKER: Surprise! Suffice it to

say that our new President has whipped up a program which promises to be both entertaining and different. It concerns something that is all about us--something that we use in our every-day lives!

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The date was March 13, 1813. Two young men, both of whom were little more than boys, Stafford and Toone (first names unknown) were clearing land for a Mr. John Baker, a minister, who lived in one of the two blockhouses in the area. Because of his residence there it was known locally as the "Baker Blockhouse", and was situated nearwhat is currently known as "Stipp's Hill". A second blockhouse, known as the "Bryson Blockhouse" in honor of the occupants thereof, stood about two miles north or northeast of the Baker blockhouse and on the opposite side of Little Salt Creek. Earlier, though when they were erected I was unable to learn, Territorial Governor, William Henry Harrison, had advised the residents of Franklin county to build a number of blockhouses at strategic points throughout the northwestern part of the county; though there had been no recent Indian trouble, Governor Harrison deemed it best that precautionary measures be taken, especially since a band of Delaware Indians had occupied for some time an area known locally as "the table-lands" about two miles north of the Baker blockhouse.

On the evening of the tragedy the boys were just completing work for the day, both chopping at the moment on the same tree, when four Indians, from where they lay concealed in a thicket, fired upon them. Both fell mortally wounded. Stafford, however, jumped up and managed to make his way to the Baker blockhouse three quarters of a mile away. Toone, shot through the spinal column, unable to move, was scalped by one of the Indians and left to die.

Stafford, on arrival at the blockhouse, was found to be shot through the stomach and one lung. Toone's cries for help could be heard throughout the night, but Mr. Baker and the few other men in the blockhouse hesitated to go to his rescue fearing that a band of Indians awaited them. Near morning, however, a runner was sent to the Bryson blockhouse to request aid. He returned with Hugh Bryson, a brawny twenty-three year old lad, who had a bit of a reputation as an Indian fighter and tracker. With Bryson leading them a half-dozen men went out and brought young Toone in. No Indians had been seen or heard. Then Bryson and three companions prepared to go after the Indians. Legend tells us that two of his companions were James Halsey and Robert Langister--the name of the other man has been forgotten. At the scene of the tragedy Bryson surveyed the area carefully and then he and his followers took the trail of the Indians which led in a northwesterly direction. At first it was a slow painstaking task for young Bryson but on the third day, near evening, he told his three companions that he was certain that they weren't far from the Indians. Having the men conceal themselves, he stole forward alone to reconnoiter. In not too long a time he returned and told them that the Indians were encamped in a draw about one-half mile ahead. The white men decided to wait until daybreak to make the attack. While his companions slept, Bryson kept watch. Near dawn he aroused them and together they slowly stole nearer and nearer the Indian camp. They found the Indians already astir. The Indian hunters crept on; when they thought themselves near enough for effective work they sprang to their feet and opened fire. Three of the Indians fell, the fourth ran towards the river--Blue River, in the neighborhood of what is now Morristown, Indiana--and another, not too severely wounded, leaped to his feet and followed. Bryson and his men ran in pursuit and Bryson overtook the wounded Indian near the river's edge. The redskin begged for mercy but none was shown. Bryson shot and scalped him. Meanwhile, the uninjured Indian had plunged into the river and made his way across. However, he had barely emerged on the opposite side when Halsey, who had been loading his rifle, shot him through the heart, crossed the river and scalped him. They then returned to take the scalps of the two Indians left dead or dying--so they thought, in the draw. But one of them was gone; unhit, it was learned later, he had dropped at the first crack of the rifles and then made his escape while the white men were engaged with the escaping Indians. And so well had he concealed his trail that even the skillful Bryson was unable to follow it.

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Some time after the "massacre" on Blue River it was noted by the residents of the Little Salt Creek country that Little Killbuck, a well-known brave of the nearby Delaware band, no longer was seen in the area. Prior to this time he had been often seen. The fact that he no longer came looked suspicious. He had been something of a bully, of course. No white man cared for his company. To be sure, most of the other Indians had been merely tolerated; a few, however, were well liked by the whites. But not Little Killbuck. No one regretted his absence, but they "smelt a mouse". Why did he suddenly shun the Baker blockhouse neighborhood? Rumor had it that he was spending his time in the Sane's Creek hills west of Laurel.

About this time one dark and stormy night a band of robbers -- or Indians -- it was anyone's guess -- attempted to break into the John Criss home which stood on the west side of Little Salt Creek and almost directly opposite the Bryson blockhouse. Criss stood by to try to repel the invaders in the event that the door gave way, while his wife rushed to place a lighted lamp in front of an upstairs window -- a "sign" that, understood by the Brysons through previous arrangement, meant "trouble here. Help needed. Hurry!" Young Hugh Bryson, aroused by another member of his family, dressed hurriedly and dashed out, rifle in hand. For a moment he hesitated at the bank of the stream on account of high water, then he plunged in and, fortunately, made his way across with less trouble than anticipated. Not certainly understanding the situation, fearing that the marauders, whoever they were, were about to gain entry into the Criss home, he fired almost immediately upon gaining the west bank. The culprits dashed away. Who had they been? Later it was learned that a wounded Indian was "taking things easy" in the Sane's Creek hills. Had he been one of the gang at the Criss cabin that night? Was it Little Killbuck and his companions that Hugh Bryson had fired upon?

By 1818 all the Indians, excepting Little Killbuck, had left Franklin County, moved west to a reservation. Little Killbuck remained in the Sane's Creek hills. However, he had grown somewhat bold again and was frequently seen in the Stipp's Hill and Little Salt Creek areas. Though it was never proven, possibly not even inquired into because of lack of evidence, it was believed by a considerable number of people that Cornelius Bryson, one of Hugh's brothers, was murdered by Little Killbuck. According to the story as it comes down to us

today, Cornelius Bryson picked up his rifle one evening and started out to try to locate a wild turkey heard calling deep in the woods. He was never seen or heard of again. Little Killbuck, it was known and angrily commented upon, was adept at imitating the call of the wild turkey.

Some time between 1818 and 1820, Hugh Bryson and Little Killbuck chanced to meet in a store in one of the local villages. Legend doesn't tell us which one; possibly it no longer exists. No matter. Little Killbuck had been drinking and was inclined to be overbearing. Bryson ignored him. Little Killbuck grew bolder, and finally began to boast about his shrewd escape from Bryson and his companions in the marsh along Blue River several years before. Bryson pricked up his ears. This was the first "proof" that anyone had that Little Killbuck was one of the murderers of Stafford and Toone. Was it true? Bryson, for one, didn't care -- much. Perhaps "it was the drink talking" but Bryson was only too glad to take the Indian's word. As soon as he could, and as quietly as he could, he consulted a few other men, men that he believed could be depended upon. Would they help? They would. They thought as little of the brutal Killbuck as did Bryson. They would hang him. Good riddance anyway, true story or not. But it wasn't, after all, Little Killbuck's time to die. This time he "smelt a mouse" and slipped unobtrusively away.

Things quieted down. In a few months Little Killbuck was very much in evidence again, going almost where and when he pleased, hunting, drinking, boasting. Some time in the spring of 1820 he went to the Bryson blockhouse and induced John, Hugh's younger brother, to go hunting with him. John's father tried to talk the boy out of going-- he felt it dangerous at any time to be too friendly with Little Killbuc, but he was especially worried on this occasion because the Indian had been drinking. But John wouldn't listen. He didn't want Little Killbuck to think that he was afraid to go. So off they went. After a bit of time passed, John's father, still suspicious and worried, sat out to follow. Shortly thereafter he heard voices raised in apparent argument -- or anger, and eacing cautiously forward he made it to a point that placed him quite near his son and the Indian. Little Killbuck was certainly drunk; he was shouting and gesturing, telling young john in no uncertain terms what he meant to do to his brother, Hugh, sooner or later. The elder Bryson, knowing that the Indian was too drunk to give the matter any particular thought, calmly walked out of his place of concealment and up to the two hunters. And just as calmly he knocked the drunken red man down, took his gun, and returned home with John. Meanwhile, Hugh Bryson, off somewhere on private business, had heard that Little Killbuck had gone to the Bryson home. He didn't trust the Indian. He hurried home and arrived there about the time

that his father and young brother returned. He listened to their story. He said nothing. He went into the house, came out with his rifle and once more took the trail of Little Killbuck. However, the Indianahad moved on, evidently he had moved rapidly in spite of his condition. Night came on and still Bryson hadn't come upon him. Hugh returned home. Next morning he sat out again, following no trail this time, but heading directly for Little Killbuck's favorite haunts. He was determined to find him. And he did. Searching the Sane's Creek hills neighborhood he came upon the Indian late the same day. He was sitting on a log, back against a tree, near the Derbyshire Falls. Bryson shot him.

\* \* \* \* \*

\* Among others, I wish especially to acknowledge my debt to the late Mr. Edgar Harley, whose notes on Franklin County Indian lore, loaned to me by his son, Mr. Clyde Harley, have proved of paramount value...The Author.

\* \* \* \* \*

OUR NEW PRESIDENT--Grant Henderson is a native of Franklin County and a charter member of the Society. A keen and observing student of Nature, he has written such works as "SONG OF THE WOODLARK", "FOUR-SQUARE LINES" and the latest of these "THE SHACK"--the titles all of which suggest the pastoral scene with which he is so familiar. He is a collector of rare books, particularly those by early Indiana authours, and has an extensive library. Outstanding as a naturalist, it is sheer delight for one to converse with Mr. Henderson on his favorite subject--the great outdoors. His livelihood comes from the collection, sales and distribution of plant life about him--Nature again affording him both a vocation and an avocation. As a poet, we like to think of him as "THE BARD OF BULL FORK"--this we say with all sincerity and respect for the lord and master of WOODLARKLAND--his home in the woods!

\* \* \* \* \*

SELF-SHARPENERS--"The county of Decatur, and its inhabitants, without making any special parade as to literature, morals or enterprise, may be said to be self-sharpeners, steadily progressing in a variety of ways, and not inferior in respectability to any part of the State." ca. 1870 ed.

\* \* \* \* \*

SHOOTING IN THE NEW YEAR

The custom of "shooting in the New Year" is a memory of my childhood, in the Mt. Etna neighborhood, in southeastern Saltcreek Township. The young men of the neighborhood would gather early on New Year's Eve, at some one home in the neighborhood, decide on a Captain, and on the route to be taken for their shooting visits. Then, as the early darkness settled over the land, they started on their round. A stop was made at each home on the route, and their guns fired, along with cries of "Happy New Year." Such a noise as they did make. I always hated that part of it, especially if they got to our house in the wee small hours of the morning. All the families of the community were expecting them, and prepared refreshments -- but all acted as if it were a great surprise. When the shooting started, the man of the house went to the door, and with much "surprise" and small talk, invited the "shooters" as they were called, into the house for refreshments -- and to get warm by the big heating stoves or open fireplaces. I recall that my parents served doughnuts, popcorn balls, sweet cider, and hot coffee to the men. In my day I remember Allen Hart, Logan Alexander, Will Shouse, Clyde and Ora Parmer, Jim Castor, Tom Hartig, Arch and Bert Paramore among the "shooters."

My father, the late Ambrose Hickman, left me this account among his notes. "Shooting in the New Year was a great event in my childhood. Three of my older brothers were at home, Cash, Mort and France, and always took part in this New Year's eve affair, and would come home in the early light of New Years with great tales of adventure, mostly centered around the refreshments served. I longed for the time to go out shooting, but not until I was fourteen did my mother let me go. My brothers were not too anxious to take me even then, but because I played "fiddle" as a violin was called, I was allowed to tag along, as my brothers put it. It was a very cold night, and a deep snow was on the ground. I soon wished I had stayed at home. I do not remember where we went or who went along, except Little Ike Parmer, who was several years older than I was. Little Ike later married my sister Amazette - Am, as we called her. I do know I have never been so cold in my life, before or since. That New Year's Day - and it must have been 1880 - I spent the day lying on the floor back of the kitchen stove trying to get thawed out, and catch up on my sleep. I decided that never again would I go with New Year's shooters. But when I was some years older I did start going and then I thought we had a good time and I enjoyed it. My brother Mort played a bass fiddle, I played the first fiddle, and Ed Hart played the second fiddle. We three took our fiddles, and did not take guns. The rest of the men

did the shooting and we did the fiddling. After we were invited in we usually played several "request" pieces. If enough people were there, they usually danced a round or two to our music. Later, the three of us used to play at all the dances in our neighborhood, and we called ourselves a string band."

I do not remember when this custom ceased in our neighborhood, but the last one I have a memory of, that I can date, was 1905. I remember that year because Grover Harding of near New Point, was our teacher at the Mt. Etna school, and boarded in our home. I recall that he, and I think Ed Glidewell, who taught at the New Pennington school, joined the shooters that New Year's Eve, and like my father, of years before, they came home exhausted.

Whether this was done in other parts of Decatur County or Indiana I do not know. I have read that it was a custom in parts of Pennsylvania. Since coming to Virginia, I have been told that much the same custom existed in Highland County, near the West Virginia line. Here the guns were fired, then poetry was recited to the host, as he came to the door to invite the shooters in.

With no greeting cards to be sent, no telephones, no radios, no TV, shooting in the New Year was a means of communication, a means of wishing others a happy, healthy, prosperous New Year. It started us out on the New Year with a warm glow of good will.

Anna Lee (Hickman) Linville  
Lexington, Virginia

\* \* \* \* \*

A LEGEND--The Clonans and the Ballmans are gone, along with them the barracks, the band hall, the depot, the furniture factory, the tin shop, the drug store, the bank, the piling yard and the saw mill, the hardware store, the jewelry shop, the handle factory and the saloon.....Nothing remains of their day except something that is not prone to change---Tub Creek! There always, it will continue to be---Always. Any one who has ever lived in New Point knows that Tub Creek merely runs through the town; it never floods or drives people from their homes; that in its time, it abounded with sun fish, chubs and craws; that in winter, its icy surface is the delight of the younger fry and come summer time no hole is too deep for wading, which reminds us of an old legend....Many people have come to New Point, and as many have left, but rest assured---if they have ever waded in Tub Creek---some time, some day, they will return. They may not stay for long, but come back they will---if they have ever waded in Tub Creek!

\* \* \* \* \*

THE BULLETIN

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DECATUR COUNTY

Volume 2 - No. 32

Greensburg, Indiana

June 20, 1967

WELCOME NEW MEMBER!

Miss Kathryn Woodfill 568

\* \* \* \* \*

THE SOCIETY'S OFFICERS 1967

President.....Grant Henderson

1st Vice-Pres.....Gene H. McCoy

2nd Vice-Pres.....Paul O. Jolliff

Corresponding Secy.....Mrs. Van  
Batterton, 525  
North Broadway  
Greensburg, Ind

Recording Secy.....Miss Helen K.  
Bussell

711 N. East St.  
Greensburg, Ind

Treasurer.....Miss Alpha Thackery  
RFD 6, Greensburg, Ind

OCCASION: Summer meeting

SPEAKER: Mr. Roy Grossman of  
Batesville is to be our  
speaker. He is a "rock  
hound". His subject  
"ROCKS". A special wel-  
come to all of the geol-  
ogists, lapidaries, and  
prospectors of the area!

DATE: Saturday night, June 24,  
1967 at 8:00 P.M.

PLACE: Billings Elementary  
School, W. Washington  
Greensburg, Indiana

BRING AS MANY GUESTS AS YOU LIKE!  
EVERYBODY IS WELCOME!

Please note that the Billings Ele-  
mentary School is located on West  
Washington Street, just off of US  
421 to Indianapolis. There is ample  
parking east of the building. NO  
SMOKING PLEASE! Those are the rules!

\* \* \* \* \*

THE LAST MEETING - With our new President presiding for the first time, we were favored with a discussion and display of BOTTLES by Mr. Frank Thrine of Batesville. Having a collection of some five thousand bottles and a correspondent with other collectors, some as far away as Australia, Mr. Thrine knew his bottles - their era, their peculiarities of design, from whence they came - everything about bottles. Another of his talents not disclosed at the meeting, were his fine line drawings of some of his collection. He buys and sells. (Duplicates only for sale.) Mrs. Thrine was a guest.

ANOTHER GIFT - The Society has recently received a collection of photographs depicting the life and times of Greensburg circa fifty years ago. Interesting as always, they will be even more so in the years to come, thanks to the generosity of Mr. Charles Walls, a long-time member.

"KENTUCKY ANCESTORS" - This is a quarterly published by the Kentucky Historical Society. If interested in locating some of your forebears, consult the EDITOR for information about this unusual publication. It is most fascinating even for general reading. (Thanks to my Frankfort agent - ed.)

A TREK FROM SALT CREEK TOWNSHIP, DECATUR COUNTY, INDIANA TO WESTERN  
KANSAS

Sources for this story are:

1. Notes left to me by my father, the late Ambrose Hickman.
2. Notes sent to me by my cousin, Kate Hickman Mason, whose parents and little brother made the journey.
3. Conversations with the late Minerva Littell Dowden, New Point, who was a relative.

I quote from my father's notes, "One very exciting event I remember from my childhood was when brother Jim and his wife and their small son left Indiana by covered wagon for the West. As I recall, it was the fall of 1879. Toss was a small child, perhaps two years old. My sister Am (Amazette) and I thought he was our special possession. On the morning the folks left, Am and I went up to the corner road north of our house to watch the wagons pull out. Five covered wagons, one after the other, left the farm lane, pulled into the "big road" as we called it, and headed West. What a sight that was for two youngsters! But the hard part for Am and me was to part with our little nephew, Toss. Am cried and said "We will never see Toss again!" I told her we still had Rose Davis - Rose being the little daughter of our older sister, Azelia Davis. That did not help Am very much. Well, we did see Toss again. Many years later I lived near brother Jim in Kansas for four years while Toss was growing into early manhood. Later Am and I each visited Toss several times in his own home in Kansas City. These families leaving was an event I never forgot and I think from that day forth, I resolved that some day I would go out West."

As I recall Daniel and Susan Agnew Anderson had four daughters. They lived about one half mile west of our home. Kate Anderson married John Paramore, Minerva married my brother Jim Hickman, Henrietta married John McConnell and Marietta married Harry Oakley. It seems to me that Harry Oakley and his wife and Sylvester Anderson and his family went out West about 1878 and as a result of this, others of the family developed "Western fever". So early in the fall of 1879 the five families consisting of the parents, Daniel Anderson and his wife, John and Kate Paramore and their three children, Jim and Minerva Hickman and their son, Toss, John and Henrietta McConnell and another Paramore family that I believe was Thomas Paramore, made up the wagon train going West to seek a new home site. All the relatives of these families were heartbroken at their going for they never expected to see any of them again, for it was a long and hard undertaking. Most of their fears proved right and they, for the most part, never saw them again.

Conversations with the late Minerva Littell Dowden told me of her reaction to her relatives leaving. She knew they would pass her home in New Point on their way westward. The morning they left she stayed in bed, listening for the sound of the wagons coming. When she heard them, she put a pillow over her head to shut out the sound of the wagons passing. She said she stayed in bed all morning crying, for she knew she would never see her relatives again. In later years, James Hickman came back to Indiana twice to see his family and each time he visited Mrs. Dowden. Kate Hickman Mason, who was born in Rooks County, Kansas, also visited several times in Indiana and always visited Mrs. Dowden. But as far as I can learn, none of them ever came back to Ind.

According to the records of Kate Hickman Mason, Sarcoxie, Missouri, it took these families six weeks to reach Downs, Kansas. Here they stopped for the winter. The Missouri-Pacific Railroad was being put through and the men worked for the railroad that winter. In the spring the trek continued to Rooks County, Kansas near Logan, Kansas. Here they took up homesteading and started life anew on the Kansas prairies. It was a hard life, hot dry summers, grasshoppers, cyclones, and cold winters and deep snows. One spring, Minerva Hickman set out a row of sycamore sprouts to provide shade in the summer and a windbreak in the winter. These sprouts grew and this avenue of trees certainly was, and perhaps still is, a true memorial to a pioneering mother.

In 1888 James and Minerva Hickman and their Hoosier born son, Toss, and Kansas born daughter, Kate, left Rooks County and settled in Boisecout, Lynn County, Kansas. Here Mr. Hickman had a grocery and feed store. \*Henrietta McConnell went to Kansas City and became one of the pioneer women in the field of medicine. John Paramore and his wife, Kate Anderson, continued to make their home in Rooks County and reared a large family. Their children were Dan, Susie, Frank, John, Nancy, Joe, Minerva, Clarence and triplets that died in infancy.

In 1929, Kate Hickman Mason visited Rooks County, Kansas. Here she made contacts with several of the Paramore family. No doubt, there are still descendants living there from the original Paramore-Anderson family who took that long trek from Saltcreek Township, Decatur County, Indiana to Rooks County, Kansas in the years 1879-1880.

Thus Hoosiers and their descendants have scattered to various parts of the world. What an interesting story this might have been had one of the group kept a diary of the trek to pass on to their future generations.

Anna Lee Linville  
Lexington, Virginia  
May 15, 1967

ed-Excellent, Anna Lee, excellent!

\*This is the same Henrietta Anderson in the Mt. Etna school history previously printed in the Bulletin.

\* \* \* \*

#### HISTORY OF THE SCHOOLS OF DISTRICT NO. 5 IN WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP, DECATUR COUNTY

The first schoolhouse built in this District was a log structure built sometime in the 1840's. Tradition fails to give the exact date of its erection. There still remained a few deers, wolves, and wild turkeys. This schoolhouse was situated on the farm now owned by Mr. Edd Templeton near where his barn now stands and was known as the Relief Schoolhouse. The old well that furnished water for the school now furnishes water for Mr. Templeton's stock.

One of the first teachers of this school was John Quincy Adams (but I suppose he was not the President). He has long since passed away. Mrs. Maggie Logan of near Kingston taught in the year 1865. The same year, Brumfield Turner was discharged from the Civil War and

attended school the following winter. Among some of the other pupils that attended school in those early days were Mrs. Charles Ainsworth, Mrs. George Fiscus and Thomas Eubanks.

In the year 1862 the pupils of the District had increased until the building was too small to accommodate the pupils. In this same year a lot was bought from John E. Robbins Sr. and on this site a one story brick house was built and has been known as the Robbins School-house. It was one of the first graded schools of Decatur County.

If I am rightfully informed, the first man that taught school in this building was a man by the name of Blake, a well known oddity of Decatur County. Mr. Blake failed in conducting the school and Mr. James Ewing, then a young lawyer of Greensburg, was called to finish the term of school.

They continued to use both school houses until the year 1866. The Relief Schoolhouse was destroyed by fire, so they decided to consolidate the schools and a second story was added to the new school building. Some of the teachers that taught here were Mr. Harvey, Jesse Harvey, Mrs. Carper, Mr. Will Pulse and Mr. Charles Powne. Among the families that went to school at this building were the families of John E. Robbins, Charles Ainsworth, Anderson Duncan, Elisha English, William Styers and Thomas Kitchen.

Among the many incidents that happened in our school days, we must not forget to mention the story of the old beech tree that stood near the wall of the schoolhouse. The teacher of the upper room had an occasion one day to punish some of the pupils. He left the room in search of a whip to inflict the punishment and when he returned, the last pupil was scrambling down the friendly old beech tree. He called the roll and each pupil returned to his seat and compromise was effected without any further trouble.

They continued to hold school in this building until the year 1887. It was then condemned on account of its weak construction. It was torn down and the material of the old building was used in the construction of the new. The building is still known as the Robbins School. Among the teachers that taught in this building were Edd Fisher, Miss Bertha Taylor, Miss Alva Grove, Miss Nellie Stout and Miss Bessie Donnell. Among the families that have gone to this building were the families of Frank Ainsworth, Edd Cooper, Monroe McNew, Brumfield Turner, Cliff English, J. B. Holmes, Eugene Ferris, Thomas Duncan, Sam Level, Hugh Bills, Jeff Morris, Charles Moss, Edd Fiscus, Grover Redington, Edd Morgan, Frank Robbins and Earl Doggett. They continued to hold school here and the last four years have been successfully taught by our present teacher, Mr. Henry Showers.

And I will now say in behalf of my classmates of the 8th grade, that we kindly thank the teacher for the interest he has taken in our welfare and we will long cherish the fond memories of the happy days spent here and with love and well wishes to those who will come after us. And we will now say in conclusion to the dear old schoolhouse, a long farewell.

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

National Archives and Records Service

Washington 25, D.C.

August 7, 1956

Mr. Gerald T. Kelsch

2110 West Heading Avenue  
Peoria, Illinois

Dear Mr. Kelsch:

Your letter of July 17, 1956, forwarded to the National Archives and Records Service, requested information about the post office at Millhousen, Indiana.

According to records of the Post Office Department now in our custody, a post office was established at Millhousen, Decatur County, on May 23, 1844. It was discontinued on September 27, 1862, and reestablished on December 1, 1862. Names of postmasters and dates of their appointment were:

Maxmilian Schneider	May 23, 1844
Bernard Hardebeck	October 30, 1850
George Happen	December 1, 1862
George Niemann	June 8, 1863
Joseph Herbert	September 16, 1863
George Rohrs	April 8, 1889
Joseph Herbert	April 14, 1893
George Rohrs	April 22, 1897
Henry Zapfe	May 29, 1901
John H. Herbert	April 1, 1903
Frances Spander	January 14, 1908
Jacob C. Glass	December 29, 1908
William F. Daily	December 20, 1918
Clem Herbert (name corrected to John C. Herbert on May 22, 1936)	March 11, 1936 *
Urban Fry	September 1, 1938 Acting (still serving) appointed Dec. 23, 1938

\*Information after 1930 furnished by the Post Office Department.

Very truly yours,

Victor Gondos, Jr.  
For the Chief Archivist  
Industrial Records Branch

(Jacob C. Glass - Dr. J. C. Glass - ed.)

## RETROSPECT

by Gail Alley Bailey

I walked across a bridge today,  
That spans old Clifty Creek.

My mind was many years away,  
Rich memories to seek.

I touched each rough hewn stone  
Grandfather Alley laid with care,  
And thought how he, and he alone  
With strength, had placed them there.

I gazed upon the stones he'd laid,  
Each one all straight and true.

And in their strength, I saw his dreams  
And heard his voice come through.

"Build your life as I did this.  
Each stone a day for you.

Let nothing ever come amiss,  
No matter what you do.

Be true to God in every way.  
To every man be true.

Stand firm in every truth you say,  
And strength will come to you.

Strength to always do the right  
Through storm and sunshine too.

Be not afraid if you must fight  
For what you know is true.

Your promise as a bond must be,  
To everyone you give.

The world will know you for your truth,  
And you will truly live."

I bowed my head in reverence there,  
In thanks to God -- that he  
Whose toil worn hands had built  
A sermon there for me.

I thanked Him for the heritage  
He gave to those I love.  
And prayed that they'll be ever true  
To guidance from above.

I walked across a bridge today,  
And found rich memories there.

My heart welled up with love to him  
Who placed each stone with care.